

**GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH**  
**ABSTRACT**

Godavari Maha Pushkaram 2015 – Conduct of Godavari Maha Pushkara Shobha Yatra – Arrangements to be made – Orders – Issued.

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REVENUE (ENDTS.II) DEPARTMENT

G.O.RT.No. 450

Dated.20.05.2015.

Read

**ORDER:**

Godavari River is the life line of Andhra Pradesh. Rajahmundry which is the seat of Telugu culture is on the banks of Godavari. Godavari Pushkaram is a second most important religious festival in India after Kumbh Mela. Millions of pilgrims take a dip in the holy river during the Pushkaram which comes once in 12 years. The river has great religious and cultural significance for Andhra Pradesh. The Government of Andhra Pradesh has several plans for proper utilization of scarce water resources which includes tapping surplus waters of Godavari which is currently going into the sea for effective utilization in several other parts of the State. Thus Godavari has immense significance for today's generation as well.

The Godavari Maha Pushkaram is going to be held from 14<sup>th</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup> July, 2015. The Pushkaram commences exactly at 6.26 AM on 14<sup>th</sup> July, 2015.

In this background, the Govt. has decided that it is necessary to involve the people, especially youth, in a meaningful way in the Pushkaram to achieve the following goals:

1. Create awareness and fully involve them in our great dharmic and cultural traditions.
2. Educate them about the importance of treating water as a sacred resource meant to be used properly thereby inculcating environmental consciousness.
3. Encourage a spirit of adventure.
4. Create a devotional movement towards Godavari

In this regard, the following steps may be taken to organize what is officially designated as "**GODAVARI MAHA PUSHKARA SHOBHA YATRA**":

**A) STEPS TO BE TAKEN AT DISTRICT HEAD QUARTERS BEFORE YATRA.**

1. District Collectors shall hold district level meetings immediately. Those who are expected to participate in these meetings include officials of Revenue, Endowments, Irrigation, Police, Medical & Health etc. besides non officials.
2. Collector shall issue a press release / notification inviting participants who are able bodied youth and below the age of 40 years, preferably. The participants should have enthusiasm and enough stamina to undertake the yatra. Such persons should get their names registered with the Tahsildar concerned positively by 14<sup>th</sup> June, 2015.

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3. Those who regularly participate in Ayyappa Deeksha go to Sabarimalai by train and then they undertake a difficult trek to Sabarimalai. Similarly, the district Collectors may encourage people who participate in Ayyappa deeksha, Bhavani deeksha of Goddess Kanaka Durga, Shiva deeksha of Lord Mallikharjuna, Srisailem etc.
4. Identify a few enthusiastic youth from each division from among the participants to act as team leaders.
5. Please note that there is no limit on the number of participants.
6. Conduct orientation training programmes to team leaders first on the procedure to be followed for the yatra.
7. Collectors will personally address the gathering and instill a spirit of confidence and enthusiasm during training.
8. A check list of **do's and don'ts** for the yatra participants is being prepared by Commissioner, Endowments. It will be sent shortly to all Collectors. This can be circulated and used while conducting orientation classes to the participants.
9. **Route of Yatra:**
  - (a) Collectors of Rayalaseema and southern Andhra Pradesh will organize buses to take yatra volunteers from their respective district headquarters upto Vijayawada. At Vijayawada, they may take a bathe in river Krishna then have the darshan of goddess Kanaka Durga and Lord Malleswara and then proceed by a trek towards Rajahmundry. The distance from Vijayawada to Rajahmundry is 160 Kms. At the rate 20 Kms per day, the trek will take about 8 days.
  - (b) All the yatra volunteers who commence their yatra from north coastal districts namely, Srikakulam, Vijayanagaram and Visakhapatnam will come by bus upto Simhachalam. From there, they will take a dip in the holy Pushkarini and worship Lord Narasimha and then proceed by walk to Rajahmundry. The distance from Visakhapatnam to Rajahmundry is about 190 Kms and it is expected to take about 9 days to cover this distance.
  - (c) The volunteers belonging to East and West Godavari districts will commence their yatra directly by walk from their respective district Headquarters and reach Rajahmundry and Kovvur respectively. The yatra volunteers of these 2 districts will take about 3 days to reach their destinations.

10. After dropping the volunteers at Vijayawada, most of the buses can return except one luggage van which will accompany the yatra volunteers. This luggage van will carry only one piece of luggage of each yatra volunteer. The yatra will be accompanied by police escort, ambulance and Dharma Prachara Ratham of temple, if available, and a luggage van/lorry.
11. One bus/mini bus may be made part of the yatra procession so that those who are very tired/sick can take rest in the bus. This bus should have public address system and play devotional music, Godavari theme songs etc. (under preparation – and will be supplied to all districts shortly by Commissioner I&PR Department.)
12. The Endowment Department in consultation with the Collectors of Krishna, West/East Godavari and Visakhapatnam will identify a suitable halting places during the trek.
13. Bhajan mandals available in the district should be roped in along with one local discourser(Pravachana Karta) who should ideally be a part of the yatra team so that he can organize Harikatha/Bhajan/discourses during night halts
14. Banners should be affixed to all the vehicles which will move in the pushkara yatra indicating the following:  
**“GODAVARI MAHA PUSHKARA YATRA 2015 ----- DISTRICT”**.  
The pushkaram logo should also be depicted in the banner.
15. Wherever possible philanthropists and charitable organizations should be identified including temples which can take up the responsibility of providing hospitality to the pushkar yatra volunteers.
16. Finalize a dress code for the yatra participants. A scarf is being prepared by the CED with pushkaram logo. It will be sent to all the districts for distribution to the participants of the yatra. If there is any shortfall of scarfs, then Collectors may get them made locally. This will be a mark of identity. Collectors may also give an ID Card to each yatra volunteer and keep a record of all persons who have enrolled for the yatra.
17. Identify a prominent personality like a swamiji or well known speaker on dharma sastra to talk to the volunteers before the start of the Yatra. The Collector and other district officials should also participate along with people representatives during the flag off.
18. It is also necessary to educate the press about the nature of the yatra so that they can give proper publicity.
19. The date on which the yatra procession of a particular district has to reach Rajahmundry will be intimated to the District Administration by Commissioner, Endowments Department. Only on that day they have to reach Rajahmundry. This is necessary to avoid congestion in Rajahmundry and enable the reception team at Rajahmundry to make proper arrangements for the yatra procession.

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20. This item will be reviewed in video conferences regularly with all district Collectors hereafter till July end.
21. The destination is Rajahmundry for all districts except West Godavari. For West Godavari, the yatra team commences from Eluru and ends in Kovvur. **(see Annexure – I for distance)**

**B) ARRANGEMENTS AT RAJAHMUNDRY AND ALSO KOVVUR:**

1. When Pushkara yatra reaches Rajamundry city, they will be received by a reception committee nominated by the Commissioner, Endowments.
2. They will be taken to a specially designated area called “Pushkara Nagar” where **they will camp for two days.**
3. Arrangements for their free boarding and lodging will be made.
4. A ghat is being exclusively earmarked for the yatra volunteers where they can take a holy dip in Godavari.
5. They will be assisted by a team of purohits who will guide them in collecting holy waters in brass containers after performing suitable rituals. The colorful kavadis and brass pots with holy Godavari water will be carried back in a Ratham / bus exclusively earmarked for this purpose. A few Pushkara yatra volunteers will travel in this ratham / bus and return to the district head quarters. **The rest of the yatra volunteers will make return journey arrangements on their own. This aspect has to be told to all yatra volunteers very clearly.**

**C) AT THE DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS ON RETURN:**

1. The District Collector along with other officers and elders in the districts shall receive the Pushkara Shakti teertham.
2. They will identify a major temple in the district head quarters for performing Abhishekam
3. A few drums of water will be arranged in which the Teertham from Godavari will be mixed.
4. The waters after mixing will be collected in small brass kalasams and carried by volunteers or elders of the various villages who can perform kalasa puja in the local temple and mix it in the local streams / water bodies like lakes or wells etc.
5. Endowment Officials will facilitate the performance of poojas in various temples in the district.

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#### **D) RECORDING OF EVENT:**

Still and video photography may be made of all major events during the yatra for the purpose of record. A copy should be sent to the Commissioner, Endowments who will be the custodian of this record for posterity.

#### **E) CONCLUSION:**

It should be emphasized to all the participants that :

- (a) Yatra is voluntary. It is expected to become a societal movement.
- (b) Volunteers have to fend for themselves wherever required. They may be advised to carry some money with them invariably.
- (c) District administration will make all efforts to make their yatra comfortable. But there is no guarantee that proper facilities would be available everywhere to the satisfaction of all participants. Hence it should be treated as a trek where the participants are expected to rough it out.

(BY ORDER AND IN THE NAME OF THE GOVERNOR OF ANDHRA PRADESH)

**I.Y.R. KRISHNA RAO**  
**CHIEF SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT**

To

The Commissioner, Endowments Department.(Action needed on Points A-7, A-15 and A-18)

The Commissioner, I&PR Department.  
All District Collectors.

#### **Copy to:**

The Secretary to C.M.  
P.S. to C.S.  
P.S. to Advisor (Communication) to Govt.  
Encl: Annexure – I (Distance chart from Rajahmundry to all district H.Q.)

// FORWARDED :: BY ORDER //

SECTION OFFICER

**ANNEXURE to G.O.RT.No. 450, Revenue (Endts.II) Department,**  
**dt.20-05-2015**

**DISTANCE CHART**

Distance from Rajahmundry: (in Kms.)

**A. RAYALASEEMA DISTRICTS**

1) Chittoor	-	638 Kms.
2) Anantapur	-	641 Kms.
3) Kurnool	-	500 Kms.
4) Nellore	-	439 Kms.
5) Kadapa	-	540 Kms.

**B. NORTH COASTAL DISTRICTS**

1) Srikakulam	-	296 Kms.
2) Vizianagaram	-	240 Kms.
3) Vizag	-	192 Kms.

**C. COASTAL DISTRICTS**

1) Kakinada	-	62 Kms.
2) Vijayawada	-	158 Kms.
3) Guntur	-	190 Kms.
4) Ongole	-	305 Kms.

**Distance from Eluru to Kovvur - 87 Kms.**

I.Y.R. KRISHNA RAO  
CHIEF SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT